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The Marvel Universe.

It's the crazed satire of HOWARD THE DUCK, a sentient fowl from another dimension, trapped in the lunatic world of human beings.

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KISS®

GENE SIMMONS ★ PAUL STANLEY ★ PETER CRISS ★ ACE FREHLEY

Written & produced for Marvel Comics by STEVE GERBER

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"Firehouse." All this after a weird, sleepless night.

I reacted as any sane person would have: I started dancing! The raw energy was contagious. Any reservations I may have harbored about the volume of the music and the transience of the "glitter" fad were flensed from my consciousness by the sheer enthusiasm of the group themselves, their outrageous but highly professional showmanship, and their undeniable rapport with the audience. In a word, I was hooked.

Later, I learned that the KISS (I'd started thinking of the group in all caps by this time) costumes were inspired by those of the Marvel superheroes. **Gene Simmons** had been a comics fan for most of his life, an aspiring artist and writer who'd even published a couple of "fanzines". (That's a contraction of "fan magazine", and it denotes a magazine published **by** comics fans **for** other fans.) The rock press had even begun referring to the group as "music's new superheroes." All the inherent potential storylines were beginning to emerge and coalesce.

That was almost a year ago.

For months, while rumors and speculation circulated in the press, the KISS Comics project seemed to lie dormant. Everyone wanted to do it. No one could quite decide on when or how. I occupied my time with writing HOWARD THE DUCK and attending innumerable meetings—with Alan Miller to discuss promotion; with **Sean Delaney**, KISS's creative and spiritual advisor and full-time crazy person, to talk plot; with Stan Lee and Bill Aucoin to discuss the state of the universe in general.

What took so long? You don't want to know, believe me. Suffice to it to say that the proposed budget I'd drawn up for KISS made it the single most **expensive** project Marvel had ever undertaken. Stan, Bill, Alan, Sean, and I all agreed on one point, at least: if we were gonna do it, we were gonna do it **right**. This had to be more than a comic book. It had to be an **event**, and, immodest as this may sound, a work of art.

Then, at last, just prior to Christmas '76 came the proverbial "breakthrough in negotiations." We were ready to roll! And suddenly what had languished for months was transformed into a Race Against Time, a duel to the death with the Dreaded Deadline Doom! As these words are written (February 19, the day after KISS's triumphal S.R.O. date at Madison Square Garden), artist Alan Weiss and I are sweating, despite the bitter cold outdoors, to ready the magazine for its June release. Fortunately, it only requires a daily investment of twenty-four hours.

Why the big rush? Again, you don't want to know. Chalk it up to the intricacies of magazine production and distribution. And let's change the subject. We'll insert some asterisks just to make it official:

***

There! Feel better already!

Now that you're aware of what's transpired behind-the-scenes, let's consider the product itself.

It's History. The first fusion of rock music with the comics medium to create a new and viable hybrid.

When word of the project first leaked—via my big mouth—to the press and the fans, KISS fans and Marvel fans, the reception was as dubious and cynical as could be expected. A KISS comic book? What the hell could it be like? **Yellow Submarine** without a soundtrack, just subtitles? The Monkees with word balloons? SPIDER-MAN with guitars?

None of the above.

From the project's inception, our attention was rivetted on the singularly unique aspect of KISS—that the four personae who appear onstage are direct outgrowths of the group members' own individual fantasies. **Gene Simmons**, **Paul Stanley**, **Peter Criss**, **Ace Frehley**. The **Demon**, the **Starchild**, the **Cat**, the **Space-Ace**. Personalities turned inside out. A photographic negative. All the character traits you and I normally submerge or suppress trotted out onstage for the inspection of, literally, a whole world.

Moreover, as Paul once remarked to Frank Rose of **Circus**: "There's a lot of people doing straight jobs where the only thing that gets them by is thinking they're really hip anyway. We just look the way they feel. We make our own rules, we live our own life, and you can follow us but we won't follow anybody else. Kiss is a way of life."

So KISS comics became more than a potentially lucrative project, more than just another Big Event, for that matter. In a very real sense, particularly for Alan Weiss and myself, it became a Cause. We had something to **say**.

KISS says it implicitly in the outlandish theatricality of their stage act. And it's been one of the major themes of rock in general since Bill Haley and the Comets. It's also at the core of psychodrama, the Human Potential Movement, transactional analysis, and probably a few dozen other factions and schools of psychological thought.

YOU CAN BE ALL YOU CAN BECOME.

Yeah. That simple. That profound, too.

The problem, it would seem, is that most people get this message **backward**: "All you can be is what you are," or something like that, so you may as well throw in the towel right now. You just cut out all that silly daydreaming. It's a waste of time. You'll never get to the top of the ladder by fantasizing, kiddo.

What's at the top of the ladder?

Another ladder.

But they don't tell you that.

Rarely, too, are people—especially young people—informed that there exists a choice of ladders. That, in fact, each human being is free to build his own goddam ladder if he or she wants! Rock and roll all night? Party every day? Obviously. If you can construct your own ladder you can throw your own bash. Pick your metaphor.

Needless to say, this has also been the implicit message of comic books, and especially Marvel Comics, for decades. There is a place in our lives, **all** our lives, for dreaming. There is a demon, a starchild, a cat, a space ace, a Spider-Man in each of us. The living child, with all its curiosity, all its creativity, and its insatiable yen for exploration and adventure.

But this is getting pretty heavy. Time to change channels again.

***

By now it's no secret that we're excited about KISS—what it means to comics, what it means for rock, what it means to those of us personally involved in the project, and, of course, what it means to the armies of KISS and Marvel fans. If we've successfully accomplished what we set out to do, we may have created a new art form, or at least a new genre. And in the process entertained a few hundred thousand people.

We're interested in your evaluation of our efforts. Would you like to see more magazines of this type? Want to see more adventures of KISS? You can let us know, preferably in no uncertain terms, by writing to:

KISS
c/o Marvel Comics
575 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

And now, after just a one-page intermission to introduce the villain of our piece, we proudly present **the hottest superhero band in the world**—!

A Brief Biography of DR. DOOM

Based upon "The Fantastic Origin of Dr. Doom" by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby

He is a master of robotics, of physics and chemistry, of aerodynamics and micro-miniature electronics. Yet he dwells within the ancient stone walls of a Central European castle. He is absolute monarch of the tiny Balkan kingdom Latveria. Yet he shuns the self-indulgent pomp and pageantry of royalty, disdains the ritualized adoration of his subjects, preferring instead their unmitigated obedience, and an almost reclusive existence. He is a man of many passions—all concealed. He is one of the wealthiest men in the world, yet he permits himself no luxury, no comfort, except his solitude.

He is the living paradox named Victor Von Doom.

•••

Sometime in the early 1920's, in the storybook kingdom of Latveria, a son was born to the gypsy family Von Doom. The father was a healer, a physician, inheritor of his own father's knowledge of herbs, barks, berries, roots, and the curative potions obtainable through their combination. The mother was notable primarily for the circumstances of her death: in a pit, with stones raining down on her head. Certain persons thought her to be a witch.

It was a difficult time to be a gypsy. Caught between two eras, they were hated and feared by the slowly fading adherents to the agrarian past, hated and scoffed at by the proponents of the industrial future, hated and persecuted—but respected—by the powers-that-were. That reluctant regard for gypsy prowess in certain areas, among them medicine, was the elder Von Doom's undoing.

One day, when Victor was barely ten summers old, his father was summoned to the royal palace and ordered to save the life of the ailing queen.

"I shall try my utmost, of course, sire," protested Von Doom, "but I can offer no guarantee of success. Your own physicians have admitted their inability to effect a cure."

"Then let me inform you, Von Doom," replied the king, "that should you fail, I can offer no guarantee that you shall leave this palace with your head."

The queen died.

Von Doom fled for his life, eluding the royal guardsmen just long enough to make a quick stop at the gypsy encampment to pick up young Victor, reasoning soundly that the boy would surely be the king's target if Von Doom made good his escape alone.

For months, through the passing of fall and on into a bitter winter, Von Doom and son roamed the forests, always a step ahead of their pursuers. The elements, however, proved impossible to avoid, and one day the gypsy wagons found Von Doom and his son huddled together in a blanket, covered with snow, at the side of a road. The father was moribund.

Within hours, despite the ministrations of the gypsies, Von Doom was dead. His last words, voiced to Boris, an old friend and member of the tribe: "My son . . . protect . . .!"

"No one need protect me, father!" Victor wailed. "I shall be strong! I shall make them pay for what they did to you and to mother!"

But Boris knew the real meaning of Von Doom's impassioned plea. Victor would need no protection, it was true. However, the world must somehow be safeguarded against the lifelong rage that would burn in the child's soul.

When Von Doom had been buried, Boris presented young Victor with the few possessions his father had left behind. Among these was a curiously decorated trunk, marked with arcane astrological symbols, which Victor had never seen before. Inside it he found a strange collection of cards, charms, fetishes, talismans—all the implements of sorcery. And he realized with grim satisfaction that the accusations made of his mother were joyfully, wondrously true. He was the son of a physician and a witch.

•••

Victor Von Doom threw all his energies into the study of both parents' crafts. By the end of his eighteenth summer, the boy had established a reputation as an inventor, a magician, a philosopher, and a rogue. For his devices were created to victimize the wealthy and the powerful—like the salve that cured headaches, but induced baldness; like the "magic" violin which made any man a virtuoso until Victor, safely out of reach, flicked a switch and shut off its power source.

Indeed, word of Victor's accomplishments spread so rapidly and so far that he was offered an opportunity to study at a major university in the United States. Anxious for the access this would provide to far more advanced laboratory facilities, Victor accepted.

But tragedy lay at the end of the journey. During an unauthorized experiment on university premises, Victor's elaborate device for communication with the spirit world exploded, permanently disfiguring his face. He was summarily expelled.

By this time, World War II had erupted in Europe, so rather than returning to his birthplace, Victor set out for the Himalayas, determined to learn the mystical secrets of Tibetan lamas. He did. Indeed, by the time he was ready to depart, his teachers were calling him "master."

It was in Tibet that Doom's strange costume was forged, the cold grey armor, the emotionless iron mask which would forever hide his ravaged countenance from view.

And it was there he swore a vow that one day, all the world would acknowledge him as its sovereign. He has not abandoned that vow. Power remains his obsession to this day.

The world may not yet bow to his every command, but the very mention of his name sends shudders up the spines of men and of nations.

And, hey—that's a start.

KISS®
By STEVE GERBER
(WRITER)
ALAN WEISS,
ALLEN MILGROM
& SAL BUSCEMA
(ARTISTS)
SEAN DELANEY
(CREATIVE CONSULTANT)

ON THEIR WAY UP MANHATTAN'S SEVENTH AVENUE, TOWARD A RENDEZVOUS WITH TWO CHUMS AT "PLAYLAND," YOUNG GENE SIMMONS AND PAUL STANLEY DEAL WITH ONE OF LIFE'S PREDICTABLE CRISES, THE PASSAGE FROM ADOLESCENCE INTO--
--ACCOUNTANCY!! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT, MAN?!
HE ACTUALLY ORDERED ME TO DITCH MY WHOLE COMIC COLLECTION-- AND THEN LAUNCHED INTO HIS "BECOME A C.P.A. AND SEE THE WORLD" ROUTINE!
SOME WORLD-- FROM THE DEBIT COLUMN TO THE CREDITS AND BACK!
THE HELL OF IT IS, PAUL-- I KEEP THINKIN', MAYBE HE'S RIGHT...!
AND THE SAME SUBWAY RIDE TWICE A DAY, AT 8:30 AND FIVE, HUH?
MAYBE LIFE IS JUST SHOPPING LISTS AND CAR PAYMENTS AND CHECKBOOKS, AND CON ED BILLS--!
AND BEING "TOO OLD FOR COMIC BOOKS," MAN-- TOO OLD AND TIRED AND PLUGGED INTO REALITY TO LET YOURSELF DREAM!
NAH-- THAT'S JUST WHAT THEY WANT YOU TO BELIEVE.
MAYBE IT'S TRUE, PAUL-- MAYBE WE GOTTA LET GO OF OUR FANTASIES SOMETIME!
"THEY"--?
EVERYBODY WHO'S INVESTED IN "THE LINE," GENE-- THE LINE THAT SAYS ADULTHOOD AND PERPETUAL DRONE-DOM ARE SYNONYMOUS!
THE LINE YOU'RE SUPPOSE TO TOE!
RIGHT!
AND THE ONE THAT SAYS-- IF THEY DON'T LOVE YA IN HIGH SCHOOL, THEY NEVER WILL!
LOOK, I HAVEN'T GOT IT ALL DOPED OUT YET-- BUT I SEE US AS SUPERSTARS, NOT ACCOUNTANTS!
DANCE PALACE
SO WHAT IF THE POPULAR KIDS THINK WE'RE NERDS? THERE'S A WHOLE WORLD OUT THERE--
--THAT STILL SAYS I'M TOO OLD TO READ COMIC BOOKS!
EVEN YOU THINK SO! DENY IT!
PUT
WELL...?
OKAY, THEN-- BRING ON THE REAL WORLD! I ADMIT IT! YOU REALLY DON'T MEET BARBARIANS ON THE STREETS OF NEW YORK IN 1977!
MARVEL COMIC
CON

UPON ROUNDING THE CORNER, HOWEVER, GENE AND PAUL ARE REMINDED HOW FUTILE IT CAN BE--
--TO ATTEMPT ANY GENERALIZATION ABOUT THE BIG, ROTTEN APPLE.
P-PAUL--LOOK AT HIS FACE! BEHIND THOSE SHADES--
WHAT'LL WE DO-- CAN'T JUST STAND AN' GAWK--!
--HE'S BLIND!
BUT THERE MUST BE A DOZEN GOONS ON 'IM--!
PLAY HARD PLAY FAIR NOBODY HURT
THE BOX, OLD MAN-- JUST FORK IT OVER, AN' WE'LL SKIP MERRILY AWAY!
NEVER, DOGS!! I SWORE AN OATH--!
E'EN UNTO DEATH SHALL I BATTLE UNTIL THOSE WHO RIGHTFULLY--
BY THE GODS!! THEY'RE HERE!! THEY'VE COME!!
FOR WITHIN YON BOX RESIDE THINE OWN SELVES-- THY LOVE AND THY RAGE, THY GRACE AND THY POWER--!
THE TRUTH AND THE MYSTERY OF MIND AND BODY, INTELLECT AND EMOTION, TIME AND SPACE--!
:ULP:
GO! FULFILL THY PROMISE! REALIZE ALL THAT THOU ART!
HEADS UP, FLAMING YOUTH! HITHER COMETH THY DESTINY!!
YOU HEARD 'IM, PAUL-- RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!!

MEANWHILE, A BLOCK OR TWO AWAY AT "PLAYLAND", A WEARY PETER CRISS PROVIDES THE BACKBEAT FOR ANOTHER ACE FREHLEY PINBALL MARATHON...!
C'MON, ACE, YOU BEEN PLAYIN' THAT SAME BALL FOR HALF-AN-HOUR NOW! 480,000 POINTS IS ENOUGH!
LET IT DROP! I WANT A TURN!
:SIGH: IF ONLY IT WERE UP TO ME...!
I WOULD SAY "DROP!" --AND THE LITTLE BALL WOULD DROP-- BUT PINBALL ISN'T THE STOCK MARKET, CURLY--!
HUH--?
AN UNFOUNDED RUMOR, AN INJUDICIOUS WORD WILL CAUSE A STOCK TO DROP...BUT THE COSMOS, OF WHICH PINBALL IS A MICRO-COSM OF--THE MUSIC OF THE SPHERES-- PLAYS ON...!
AM I MAKING MYSELF CLEAR, CURLY...?
I DUNNO. WHY DON'T YOU ASK GENE AND PAUL?
HI, GUYS! WHAT'S--?
HALLO, CURLY-- HALLO, CURLY--!
STASH THIS! QUICK!
SHOOT
GYPSY: FORTUNE TELLER
50¢
PHOTO 2½ MIN
OH OKAY!
SURE HAS BEEN FUN RAPPIN' WITH YOU GUYS...!
THE PHOTO BOOTH, PAUL-- HURRY!--WE CAN HIDE IN THERE!
SO TELL ME, ACE-- WHY DO I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN SET UP..?
THE BALL DROPPED, CURLY--YOUR TURN!
4 POSES 50¢
PHOTOS 2½ MIN
THEY'RE NOT THE TYPE TO SHOPLIFT. I WONDER WHAT--?

YA SURE THEY DUCKED IN HERE--?
YAJ
THERE'S SOMETHING RATTLIN' AROUND INSIDE...!
THEY MUST'A GIVE US THE SLIP, FRINGE. I DON'T SEE 'EM--!
THEN YA AIN'T LOOKIN' HARD ENOUGH! SPREAD OUT! TEAR THE JOINT APART IF YA HAVETA--
--BUT FIND THEM FREAKS!!
GEE IT SURE IS A PRETTY BOX.

SHHH-- ACE, KEEP IT DOWN--THOSE TOUGHS THAT JUST STOMPED IN--!

IT'S THE PRETTIEST BOX I'VE EVER LAID EYES ON!
HUH-- WHASSAT? --WHO--?

I KNOW WHAT'S IN IT--!
SHUT UP, ACE--!

A PEARL OF GREAT VALUE --MAYBE SEVERAL-- NO, ON SECOND THOUGHT--
ACE-- SHUT UP!!
HEY, YOUSE GUYS-- HOLD IT!! FREEZE!!

THEY FOUND YOU, HUH?
LISTEN, FELLAS, I KNOW IT'S ALREADY CROWDED IN HERE, BUT--!
--IT MUST BE SOMETHING PRICELESS-- SOMETHING EVEN SEARS DOESN'T STOCK--!

YOU'VE STILL GOT THE BOX?! BUT I TOLD YOU--
THERE WASN'T TIME, MAN!
MAYBE THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE ON THREE-BY-FIVE CARDS--!
OH, MAN...!
WHADDAYA SAY, FRINGE? WANNA JUST WASTE 'EM-- GET IT OVER WITH?
NOT 'LESS WE HAVETA! THOSE 'RE MY ORDERS!
LISTEN UP, YA PUNKS! YA GOT 'TIL THE COUNT O' TEN!
THEN WE'RE COMIN' IN!
THEY MEAN IT-- THEY'RE GONNA KILL US!
UNLESS WE THINK INSTEAD OF BLATHER!
I CAN'T STAND THE SUS-PENSE ANY LONGER!
ACE, THIS IS SERIO--
OH, WOW...!
AND DESPITE THE PERIL...
THE THUGS OUTSIDE ARE FORGOTTEN. ALMOST MESMERIZED, PETER, GENE, ACE AND PAUL EXAMINE THE BOX'S CONTENTS.
THREE ODD WOODCARVINGS AND A BLACK STAR: THE SYMBOLISM IS OBSCURE AT BEST. INEXPLICABLY, THE YOUTHS REACT AS THOUGH THE OBJECTS WERE PERSONAL TOTEMS.
--9-- 10!

OKAY, PUNKS, YA HAD YER CHANCE!
WE'RE-- HUH?!
SMOKE!!
THE IDIOTS SET THE BOOTH ON FIRE!
N-NO-- LOOK!!
SOMETHIN'S SLITHERIN' OUT, BUT--
WHAT THE HELL IS IT?!?
SOME KINDA SNAKE, YA DOPE, BUT HOW--?
THE QUESTION IS NEVER ANSWERED. FOR BARELY A HEARTBEAT LATER...
...THE PHOTO BOOTH EXPLODES IN A PAROXYSM OF THUNDER AND LIGHTNING!!
BOOM
AND THE FOUR YOUTHS EMERGE--BIZARRELY TRANSFORMED!

FOR A MOMENT THEREAFTER, ALL SOUND SEEMS TO CEASE. THE THUGS, THE "PLAY-LAND" PATRONS, THE WEIRD FOURSOME ALL STARE AT ONE ANOTHER IN STUNNED SILENCE.
HOWEVER--
WHAT 'RE STANDIN' AROUND FOR?
TAKE 'EM!!
--THE PEACE AND QUIET DOESN'T LAST FOR LONG.
YAARRGH
YAAR RGH
HOLY MOTHER--!
H-HIS BOOT-- I THINK IT-- BIT ME!!
FAR OUT!
GENE SOUNDS LIKE A CROSS BETWEEN A BULLDOZER AND A DINOSAUR!
BUT, AS USUAL, SOMEBODY'S GOTTA GUARD HIS REAR FLANK!
AND IT LOOKS LIKE I'M ELECTED!

NAUGHTY LITTLE RATS! PUDDY TAT'S GOTCHA!
BUT I DON'T EAT RATS--SO I'LL LET YOU GO--
--IF YOU PROMISE TO SCAT!
THOUGHT YOU MIGHT SEE IT MY WAY.
WELL, ALL RIIIGHT! A BRUCE LEE FAN!
BUT I GOT NEWS FOR YOU, NUNCHAKU!
THE DRAGON IS DEAD!
YOU DIG IT--DEAD AN' GONE--AN' YOU'RE PARALYZED WITH GRIEF!!
ZZZ...
BUG OUT, CURLY.
THAT'S THE LAST OF 'EM! HOW 'BOUT WE SPLIT BEFORE THE COPS SHOW UP?
I WOULD CONSIDER THAT HIGHLY ADVISABLE.
SO SAYING, ACE GESTURES...
...AND THE GROUP HITS THE ROAD!
WHILE FRINGE LIES COLLAPSED IN A CORNER...
...MUMBLING INTO HIS WRISTWATCH.
TH-THEY GOT AWAY...!
AND SURPRISE: THE WRISTWATCH ANSWERS!
WITH EMPHATIC DISAPPROVAL.
END OF DISCUSSION.
END OF FRINGE.

UNLIKE THE STREET CHIEFTAN, HOWEVER, THE FOUR YOUTHS REMATERIALIZE -- AN INSTANT LATER AND MILES AWAY.
THE STATUE OF LIBERTY....!
LONG MAY SHE WAVE!
SOMEBODY EXPLAIN THIS TO ME! HOW'D WE GET FROM 50TH STREET TO SOUTH FERRY WITHOUT--?
INSTANTANEOUS MATTER TRANSPORT -- TELEPORTATION! IF YOU READ COMICS, YOU'D KNOW!
YES, BUT HOW-- WHO--?
ACE--?!
I CANNOT TELL A LIE: I THUMBED THE RIDE.
WELL, I STILL DON'T GET IT! LOOK AT US! WHAT HAVE WE BECOME?
POWERFUL-- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OUR LIVES!!
IT'S TRUE... WE'RE NOT KIDS ANYMORE ... MAYBE WE'RE NOT EVEN HUMAN...!
I MEAN -- I HAD TOTAL CONTROL OVER THAT HOOD'S EMOTIONS--!
AND THEN THERE'S THE MATTER OF THE MOON.

IT'S UNUSUALLY FULL...!
WHAT?
FOR A NEW MOON.
TONIGHT IS THE NEW MOON... BUT IT LOOKS OVERSTUFFED.
FORGET HIM! WE'VE GOT SOME QUESTIONS TO GRAPPLE WITH!
LIKE... ARE OUR NEW BODIES AND NEW POWERS PERMANENT?
NOTHING IN THE UNIVERSE IS PERMANENT, CURLY.
WITNESS THE MOON...!
HEY! WILL YOU CLAM UP ALREADY ABOUT THE FREAKING--
GENE-- LOOK!!
HE'S RIGHT-- THE MOON'S FALLING FROM THE SKY!!
OR SO IT SEEMS -- UNTIL THE POCKMARKED SPHERE GENTLY TOUCHES DOWN ON THE WATER--
--AND ITS TRUE DIMENSIONS BECOME FRIGHTENINGLY APPARENT.
FRIGHTENING BECAUSE IT IS NOT THE MOON...
...JUST A GOOD LIKENESS, USED TO MASK SOMETHING STRANGER BY FAR!

A SHIP--OF STATE.
RATATATATATA
A FLOURISH OF HORNS.
THE ROYAL ENTOURAGE.
GYPSY MAIDENS--
--EACH MORE ALLURING THAN THE ONE BEFORE--
--SCATTERING DELICATE PETALS--
--FOR THEIR MASTER'S IRON BOOT TO TRAMPLE!
FOR THEIR MASTER IS NONE OTHER THAN THE METAL-MASKED MONARCH OF LATVERIA--
--DOCTOR DOOM!

I CAN ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO YOUR TRANSFORMATION, YOUTHS--
--FOR IT WAS ACCOMPLISHED WITH MAGICAL ENERGIES WHICH, BY RIGHT, BELONGED TO ME!
JUST AS YOU, THE VESSELS OF SAID ENERGY, MUST BECOME THE PROPERTY OF... DR. DOOM.
HEY, CURLY-- DID HE SAY "VESSELS"--
--OR "VASSALS"?
THE BOX OF KHYSCZ WAS AMONG THE IMPLEMENTS OF GYPSY SORCERY WHICH I WAS TO HAVE INHERITED UPON MY MOTHER'S DEATH.*
"BUT THERE WERE THOSE AMONG THE GYPSY TRIBE WHO DEEMED ITS POWER TOO IMMENSE FOR VON DOOM TO POSSESS. THUS, DURING MY YOUTHFUL SOJOURN IN TIBET--
"THEY STOLE THE BOX OF KHYSCZ--AND ONE OF THE TRIBE'S MYSTICS BROUGHT IT TO THESE UNITED STATES, WHERE HE DEVOTED HIS LIFE TO ITS SAFEKEEPING!
"THE OLD MAN WHO BESTOWED THE BOX UPON YOU-- THE STREET MUSICIAN KNOWN ON TIMES SQUARE AS 'DIZZY THE HUN'-- WAS THAT SELFSAME GYPSY MYSTIC!
"AND, YES, THE RUFFIANS WHO SOUGHT TO SEIZE THE BOX WERE IN MY EMPLOY."
*SEE "A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF DR. DOOM", ELSEWHERE IN THIS MAGAZINE, FOR FURTHER DETAILS. --S.G.
I CAN ANTICIPATE WHERE THIS IS LEADING: DIRECTLY TO LATVERIA AND OUR ETERNAL SUBJUGATION BY DR. DOOM!
NO HUMAN BEING SINCE HITLER HAS UNDERSTOOD THE PSYCHOLOGY OF POWER AS DOOM DOES.
BUT MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO STUDY AT HIS FEET--I DON'T THINK I'D GET OFF ON LICKING HIS BOOT.
BOYS, WE'VE GOT A FIGHT ON OUR HANDS.

EVEN AS THAT THOUGHT FORMS IN THE DEMON'S MIND...
...DOOM'S GYPSY MAIDENS EXTRACT FROM THEIR BASKETS INCONTROVERTIBLE EVIDENCE OF ITS TRUTH.
IN ANY EVENT, MY FRIENDS, THE UPSHOT OF THIS UNFORTUNATE IMBROGLIO--
--SINCE I CAN NO LONGER POSSESS THE BOX OF KHYSCZ-- IS THAT I MUST OWN YOU!
I DON'T LIKE THE LOOK IN THEIR EYES! SOMETHIN' INHUMAN--
JEEZ, I THINK THEY'RE ACTUALLY GONNA--
"FIRE!" THUNDERS DOCTOR DOOM!
OKAY, MONSTER --NOW WHAT??
BLAM
CHOOM
WHAT DO YOU THINK, GLAMOR-PANTS?
WE FIGHT BACK!
YEARRGH
ONCE AGAIN, FLAME SPURTS FROM THE DEMON'S EBONY LIPS--
--MELTING THE "SKIN" FROM DOOM'S MOLLS, REVEALING THEM AS-- ROBOTS!

FACTORY GIRLS -- RIGHT OFF THE ASSEMBLY LINE!
COLD, HEARTLESS, MECHANICAL PRODUCTS OF TECHNOLOGY--

--LIKE SOME WAITRESSES I KNOW.
DOOM'S SPLITTING-- LIKE THE BATTLE DOESN'T EVEN CONCERN HIM!
GENE--REALLY--THIS IS NO TIME TO GLOAT! DOOM'S GETTING AWAY!!
WHAT?!

I SAID--
(PARDON ME, MISS)
--DOOM'S GETTING AWAY!!
CHANK
THE HELL HE IS--!
HEAVENS! HE CAN FLY--!
GENE-- FORGET IT! WE'VE KAYOED THE FLOOZIES--
--AND A CROWD'S STARTING TO GATHER!
ACE--?
SAY NO MORE, CURLY! BOTH HANDS THIS TIME!
POIT
"I'LL BET THIS LANDS US IN JERSEY CITY-- OR EVEN BEYOND!"

BEYOND--
FAR
BEYOND.
WHAT WE CALL "THE WORLD" SEEMS SUDDENLY TO EVAPORATE-- AS THE FOURSOME FIND THEMSELVES HURTLING THROUGH SOME INTERDIMEN-SIONAL VOID!

UH...I THINK MAYBE I OVERDID IT...!
THERE ARE NO TOUCHSTONES HERE, NO FRAME OF REFERENCE AT ALL--NO UP OR DOWN, IN OR OUT, TO OR FROM, NOW OR THEN--!
JUST THE UNEARTHLY COLD-- THE SENSE OF WEIGHTLESSNESS-- THE TERRIBLE ISOLATION FROM ALL THAT IS FAMILIAR--AND THE FALLING--INTO FOREVER--A SPACE OUTSIDE TIME--!

MEANWHILE, WHAT OF NEW YORK'S REACTION TO THESE EVENTS?
THE OFFICES OF J. JONAH JAMESON, PUBLISHER OF THE DAILY BUGLE, THE FOLLOWING MORNING:
WHAT?!
BLAST! MURDOCH HAD A PHOTOGRAPHER AT SOUTH FERRY BEFORE THE FIGHT WAS OVER! THE POST'S ON THE STREET WITH AN EXTRA.. AND PICTURES.!!
I WANT PHOTOS OF THOSE GLITTERY GOONS, PARKER-- OR YOU CAN GO TO WORK FOR THE KANGAROOS, TOO!
EVER THE FAITHFUL EMPLOYEE...
MOVE, PARKER!!
PETER PARKER SETS OUT--IN HIS OWN DISTINCTIVE MANNER-- TO SCOUR THE CITY FOR ANY SIGN OF THE MACABRE QUARTET.
OF COURSE, AT THE MOMENT, IT'S A FUTILE EFFORT, EVEN FOR THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN!
BUT HIS WEB-SLINGING TOUR OF GOTHAM CARRIES HIM PAST THE BAXTER BUILDINGS, HEADQUARTERS OF THE FABULOUS FANTASTIC FOUR...
WHAT ARE
...WHERE, EVEN NOW, THE INVISIBLE GIRL, MR. FANTASTIC, AND THE THING ARE OCCUPIED WITH SIMILAR CONCERNS.
TH-THEY'RE HIDEOUS REED--SUCH EVIL IN THEIR FACES!
WE MUSN'T JUDGE BY APPEARANCES, SUE.
THAT'S TELLIN' HER, STRETCH!
BESIDES, I THINK THEY'RE KINDA CUDDLY-LOOKIN'!
'COURSE I ALWAYS GET SENTIMENTAL WHEN I SEE SOMETHIN' EVEN UGLIER 'N ME!
ENTER: THE HUMAN TORCH.
REED-- I'VE GOT THE AVENGERS ON THE VISIPHONE!

THE SOMBER COUNTENANCE OF THE VISION, THE AVENGERS' ANDROID MEMBER...
--AS DOOM IS YOUR ARCH-FOE, WE ASSUMED YOU MIGHT HAVE INFORMATION--?
...GREETS REED RICHARDS AS HE RACES TO ANSWER THE CALL.
I WISH WE DID VISION--BUT WE'RE IN THE DARK, ALSO.
IF YOU LEARN ANYTHING...!
AVENGERS MANSION:
WELL, LADIES AND GENTS--THERE FIZZLES OUR LAST, BEST HOPE!
LOOKS LIKE WE CALLED THIS EMERGENCY SESSION FOR NAUGHT!
WE'RE JUST GONNA HAVE TO WAIT AND SEE--LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD.
MAYBE, BEAST--AND MAYBE NOT! THERE'S STILL ONE MAN--!
WHOM ART THOU CALLING, YELLOW-JACKET?
A FORMER ASSOCIATE OF MINE, THOR--
"--WHO KEEPS TABS ON ALL THESE MYSTICALLY-TINGED OCCURRENCES.
"DOCTOR STRANGE!"
AYE, YELLOW-JACKET, I CAN ADVISE YOU, BUT...
YEAH... I SEE... YOU'RE RIGHT. THE OTHERS WON'T LIKE IT... BUT WE'LL RESPECT YOUR WISHES.
THANKS, DOC. SO LONG...!

(Continued on page 43)

get off!

Living on this strife-torn globe, you know that each and every one of us needs one thing: a way to ***Get off!***

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Blood on the Plates

by Stark Raven

How much is a band supposed to give?

It's been a rock 'n' roll tradition since the days of Johnny Ray—who would collapse in hysterical sobs onstage while straining his vocal cords to unheard-of extremes of attenuation—that the performer must suffer, or at least labor, for his audience. The limos, glad rags, American Express cards, and adulation were never supposed to come easy.

But *how much* is a band expected to give?

The mind? The body? The very souls of its members?

Oh, sure, *that!* But people expect that much even from Frank Sinatra.

Okay, well how about life itself? The Rolling

Stones sing of committing "suicide right on the stage" to satisfy the crowd's "teenage lust." And Jim Morrison, Janis Joplin, Brian Jones and Jimi Hendrix have achieved legend status by taking what might be termed a permanent pause for the cause. Is that enough? Are six prunes too many? Three, too few? If a star goes out in blaze of glory, it might create a stir, it might sell a few records, but ultimately, it deprives the audience—not to mention the star—of any future thrills, chills, and aesthetic gratification. So here's a vote for keeping the endangered species known as "rock star" from extinction.

Living the rock 'n' roll horror story is enough.

KISS, however, has added a new wrinkle to the traditional heavy-metal gothic. With this band, the inner demons are all up-front, leaping and writhing around out there in the spotlight. Rather than haunting the stars, they've been loosed on the audience! ("You drive us wild, we'll drive *you* crazy.") Sure, KISS says: we'll move you, shake you, work up a steamy, pungent sweat for you. We'll blast your ears and rock your socks off and vibrate your bodies into joyful spasms. But you'll have to pay the price—we're gonna scare the pants off you!

KISS touches that part of us which, in more innocent days, led us by the nose into dark movie theatres on sunny Saturday afternoons and compelled us to watch Frankenstein, the Amazing Colossal Man, the Fly, and Rodan destroy entire cities and devour our fellow human beings. KISS is the *The Wizard of Oz* performed live, *The Exorcist* with a beat. KISS is to high school as Godzilla is to grade school. The raw, cathartic energy of their performance demands more than mere idolatry. They'll settle for nothing less than that unchewed kernel of popcorn you got caught at the back of your throat at the best Saturday matinee you ever saw. Booga-booga!

It's this conscious and willing participation in the horrific aspect of rock that sets KISS apart. The group itself is as monstrous and mysterious as the demon called Success.

Which brings us to the subject of ritual sacrifice.

At this point, we feel obliged to state that the remainder of this article is intended for day-dreaming, fantasy-prone audiences. Pre-teenagers and other sensitive readers, especially post-teenagers, may wish to look away. In other words, punks only past this point.

You see, KISS in typically demonic fashion, elected to celebrate the publication of this magazine . . . by *bleeding* for their fans.

A word or two now on the nature of horror.

Transylvanian castles, mysterious uncharted islands, and cobwebs direct from central casting all have their place. But for the generation that's lived through Vietnam, Watergate, and interminable reruns of "The Munsters," they're simply no longer frightening. This is the age of Frankenberry and Count Chocula. Children sleep with terrycloth sharks instead of teddy bears. The old horror classics may retain their charm, but they're not as scary as Times Square at three a.m., or the nuclear power plant down the block.

As with science fiction, reality has outstripped the old horror-movie The challenge facing the contemporary writer of scary stuff is to reshape the mundane, the commonplace into an atmosphere that exudes terror. Satanism in the supermarket. Voodoo at the gas station. Druids in Des Moines. The slobbering, snaggletoothed ogre sneaking up behind you! Look out!! AAAAGH!!!

You get the idea.

That's why KISS chose not to hire an occult

priest, but rather a doctor to play the vampire. That's why the ceremony took place not out on the moors, cloaked by fog, but behind pristine white screens under the glare of photographers' lamps. What could be more blatantly horrific than *arranging* it all by appointment?

Nothing.

I know.

I was there. The photos accompanying this article are genuine.

"Step into my parlor," the physician's eyes seemed to say.

Gene, Paul, Peter, and Ace complied.

While I watched, the foursome rolled up their sleeves, or removed their gauntlets, and extended their arms. The doctor unveiled his gleaming needles, and, one by one, with cold, professional precision, the veins were pierced and the dark red liquid extracted.

The vials were then placed in the Official KISS First Aid Kit and transported to a place of safekeeping—before Gene could drink them.

Was there a purpose to all this, you ask?

There was indeed.

When this magazines goes to press, those vials will be lovingly poured into the vats of ink, making this the first comic book ever to be *printed in blood*.

A bond exists now and forevermore among KISS, their fans, and Marvel Comics. A blood-brotherhood of truth, justice, and rock 'n' roll.

That's how much a band is supposed to give.

Let Air Latveria spirit you away

At last. The Carter Administration has lifted all restrictions on foreign travel, and Americans can once again visit the tiny kingdom known for centuries as the Jewel of the Balkans.

Latveria, land of enchantment.

Latveria, where the smell of incense and the spell of gypsy magic so pervade the atmosphere you can almost feel your skin crawl.

Latveria. By day, stroll her quaint cobblestone streets. Visit the shops where skilled craftsmen still manufacture watches, cabinetry, and sub-miniature ruby lasers by hand. By night, prowl her back alleys. You really haven't lived 'til you've spent an evening for two in a Latverian bistro, sipping aphrodisiac potions and tapping your toe to the blues improvisations of the Black Forest Five.

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KISS

Where No Band Has Tread Before

A KISS History, complete with discography

by Michael Gross

The best way to understand KISS is to look at the faces in the concert-going crowd, tens of thousands of faces attached to the fans who have made KISS America's premier rock and roll band. "Our audiences," drummer Peter Criss once said, "are a show in themselves."

In the front row is a bat-faced Gene Simmons lookalike, his tongue twirling towards his girl with swooping, diving finesse. A few rows back sit four blond children. They couldn't be more than fourteen years old, and at first glance their individual genders are indiscernible. Yet they wear the distinctive markings of a space-Ace Frehley, a starchild Paul Stanley, another mean-Gene, and a felinely curious Peter Criss.

Fantasy. Identity. That's KISS.

Just as important, that's the KISS Army.

So there are two stories to tell. Two stories that lead to the recording of KISS' sixth Casablanca album, **Rock and Roll Over.** One story begins, for us, in a loft on West 23rd Street in New York City. The other begins in the mind of a loyal KISS fan from Terre Haute, Indiana.

First, New York.

Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley, both recently estranged from other, unsuccessful local rock bands, rent the aforementioned loft as a rehearsal hall. This time around they're determined to make it. The loft is an acoustic abomination: they stack egg crates on the walls to absorb the sound. The loft is draft-ridden, as chilly in midwinter as the icy winds gusting through the concrete canyons outside. They pass a bottle of wine back and forth to keep warm. The loft is also easy prey to burglars—and, yes, at one point Gene and Paul return to the place from a rare night out to find they've been ripped off.

Working night and day, trudging home only to sleep, Gene and Paul begin to shape the rhythm and bass foundation of the distinctive KISS sound. Together and separately, they compose music and lyrics, several of which will ultimately be recorded on KISS' first album. Too, they conceive the idea of a band with "secret identities", faces hidden behind decorative make-up.

Asked where he was born, Gene Simmons invariably replies: "I was hatched." Asked where he was hatched, Gene will occasionally allow as how he came out of his shell in New York City. One needn't ask Paul. His face tells the tale of his emergence from the breast of Venus, by way of Zeus, God of Thunder. Gene grew up in a world of Lon Chaney films, Marvel Comics, bats, capes, pet tarantulas, and self-induced bloody dream hallucinations. Paul is rumored to be the reincarnation of a medieval prince who died in the dungeon of a jealous rival and vowed that his next life would be dedicated to love in all its forms. In his present incarnation, however, he too is a native New Yorker.

Peter Criss, as legend has it, was rescued from a jungle plane crash by a pack of sabre-tooths. He often recalls the softness of his foster mother's coat with a tear and a smile. At the ripe age of three (perhaps four, because time works slowly in the wilderness of youth), Kitten Criss was snared and removed from his jungle habitat by a band of white hunters. Their intent, the legend continues, was to domesticate Pete, but they soon discovered he had no inclination toward a quiet life of Kal-Can and Litter Green. He escaped, snapping the barrels of their rifles with his teeth, and beat a path all the way to the alleys of New York.

There, some years later, an ad in **Rolling Stone** leads him to Simmons and Stanley.

"Are you thin?" they ask him, over the telephone. (Gene and Paul had both shed considerable weight during their starvation stay in the loft.) "Yeah," Pete answers, puzzled. "You're hired," they reply. Already, Gene and Paul have come to recognize the importance of **Image** to their future success.

Another ad, this one in the **Village Voice,** and then there are four: "This tall fellow walked in," Gene recalls, "wearing one orange sneaker and one red one." Ace Frehley. The space cadet son of a team of interplanetary explorers stranded on earth in some bizarre "Star Trek" out-take. He prances and pulses. He plays guitar. His eyes and mind are seemingly focussed on Andromeda most of the time, but somehow the right notes always emanate from the amp. Additional, independent brains in his fingertips? No one knows. But he, too, signs aboard the voyage to the outer reaches of rock and roll, where no band has tread before.

There is still the matter of a name for the quartet, however. Peter, Paul learns, had at one time played in a band called Lips. It's close . . . but not **quite** right. Ambling down the sidewalks of Upper Broadway with Gene one day, the inspiration strikes him like a bolt from the black. Lips. Take it one step farther!

KISS!!

When Paul proposed it to the others, they assented immediately and enthusiastically. Peter: "KISS. It really means a lot. It's the first thing you do to a chick or anybody. It could also be the kiss of death. It's a strong word. It's easy to remember." KISS is also one of the best, most distinctive names ever to come down the rock and roll pike. In an age when most bands' names read like whole paragraphs, KISS is eloquent and potent in its simplicity.

KISS!

Their first gig is at Coventry, a small club in Queens, New York, on January 30, 1973. Three nights for thirty dollars. But it's exposure. After Coventry, KISS plays at The Daisy in Amityville, New York, and the Bleecker Street Loft in Greenwich Village. In June, they record their first demo tape at Electric Lady Studios.

Paul recalls: "The studio owed Gene and me a thousand dollars. We took studio time instead. We made it clear we wanted Eddie Kramer producing. Gene and I had known Eddie since about 1970. He was **it** at Hendrix' Electric Lady Studio. He'd worked for Jimi, Zep, Humble Pie. We made our first five-song demo tape with him, and he's still with us today."

The songs on the tape are "Deuce," "Strutter," "Watchin' You," "Black Diamond," and "Firehouse."

During July and August, KISS appears at the Diplomat Hotel in midtown Manhattan. Though the gig is not as prestigious as it sounds—the Diplomat qualifies as a sort of luxury fleabag—it proves disproportionately propitious. Fred Kirby gives the band an enthusiastic first press notice in **Variety.** And at their August 10th performance, they

are seen by Bill Aucoin, who recognizes their potential at once and offers to manage the group—if and **only** if they want to become superstars.

Some if.

They agree immediately, and Aucoin requests two weeks to put together a recording deal. Two weeks later, the group signs with Neil Bogart's Casablanca Records, the first act to join this new label.

The show is on the road. The group's first album, entitled simply **Kiss,** hits the racks in February, 1974. **Hotter than Hell,** KISS' second release, follows in October of the same year. And of course, there are the tours.

KISS is the last band **ever** to play the Fillmore East, and through 1974 and 1975, KISS averages a concert every other day. Soon, their agents are having a hard time finding anyone to play on a bill with them. Too outrageous, other bands complain. Too overwhelming. Too— too— undignified!

But the crowds feel differently. "It isn't an audience," **Circus** magazine says, "it's a veritable army of fanatics." In the tradition of Washington and Jefferson, Robespierre and Lenin, Castro and Mao and please hold the lettuce, KISS is leading a revolution, by the flash-pots' white glare.

With Casablanca president Bogart producing, KISS records **Dressed to Kill** early in 1975. Combined with the material from their first two albums, they now have the musical and theatrical firepower to conquer America. And they do—in the concert halls.

Radio, however, proves a problem. Program directors, the people who decide which records you hear and which you don't on their stations, seemingly take an instant dislike to the weirdly

costumed foursome and decide to nip the phenomenon in the bud. No band, they believe, can succeed, or even survive, without airplay. KISS gets no airplay. Thus, KISS will not survive, ha ha ha. One phenomenon neatly squelched. KISS no longer exists. The thousands of fans at the hundreds of shows and the millions of hand claps that shake all those roofs do not exist. So they believe. Maybe they also believe that frogs wrapped in tin foil can't ride bicycles. The point is: what the program directors believe will prove entirely irrelevant.

Alive!, a two-lp set produced by Eddie Kramer and released in September, 1975, becomes the first KISS album certified gold (one million dollars in record sales) and then **platinum** (one million **copies** sold)! "We had to bring out a live album," says Gene Simmons, "because we'd been trying all along to capture our live sound in the studio."

Suddenly, radio stations are forced to sit up and take notice.

Alive! is the answer to a KISS fan's dreams. You want airplay? You got it! You wanna be on a rock mag cover? You got it! KISS can no longer be ignored—or contained.

KISS follows the live album with **Destroyer,** produced by Bob Ezrin, dense, filled with strings and things, marking their ascent to superstardom with an experiment that, had it failed, might have snuffed a lesser band. **Destroyer** informs KISS fans that the group will not flounder, decay, repeat themselves, or, most importantly, start playing rip-off reggae, joining the rock decay set, pandering to the Southern Californiacized loudly laid-back critical minority. There will be no tampering with their fan-fueled revolutionary ethic in any way!

The result? More magazine covers, TV coverage, more airplay, awards to hang on the walls, and a hit single by drummer Peter Criss—a ballad called "Beth" that no one (really) thought would happen. A ballad that the best A&R men in the country, the Kiss Army, pull from the album and make a smash.

Which leads conveniently to our second story. The one, as far as KISS is concerned, that really matters. WVTS radio in Terre Haute, Indiana, was being bombarded by letters from KISS fans who wanted to hear their favorite group crease the airwaves. The letters were read on the air. Thousands of calls blocked the WVTS switchboard. The entire town was bitten by the KISS bug.

"I don't know what this KISS is," said Idee May Dealy, the owner of a small Terre Haute confectionary, "but if you could package it, you'd make a fortune."

KISS hears about the ruckus and agrees to play in Terre Haute at the urging of local U.S. Army personnel and a rapidly growing fan club, the KISS Army. In freezing snow and twenty-degree temperatures, a crowd of fans greets KISS on their arrival. The mayor proclaims KISS Day. Ten thousand fans jam the concert hall in a town where, B.K.A. (Before KISS Army), the group couldn't even get on the air.

KISS' tour of the nation's largest concert halls in 1976 puts the group solidly among the highest echelons of the rock elite. Attendance records are broken with Space-Ace riffing; nonbelievers are converted with a flick of Gene's tongue; radio resistance is beaten down with a coy cat's toss of a drumstick and a nod towards lady Beth; and sex education classes are rendered obsolete with a bump of the Stanley hip. KISS becomes, in that otherwise dreary Bicentennial summer, the standard bearers of America's flaming youth. Even the minions of decency are forced to admit that a splendid time is being had by all.

At summer's end, Casablanca, in association with Aucoin Management **and** the KISS Army, releases a specially-priced limited edition, three-lp set, (consisting of **Kiss, Hotter than Hell,** and **Dressed to Kill**) entitled **The Originals,** for the legions of fans who'd discovered KISS since **Alive!** Blink your eye. That's how long is takes for all 250,000 copies to hit the streets. (Music Biz Definition of "streets": Where the Action Is!) It calls to mind an oft-quoted comment from Bill Aucoin: "Initial reaction to the group was sometimes guarded and often simply hostile. As with many supertalents, the public didn't know whether to love them or hate them."

Now they know. Love and KISS. The strangest match-up since Reagan-Schweiker, but this odd couple works!

Fall, 1976. With KISS now accepted as a force in American rock, and fast attaining a world-wide audience (with a successful European tour behind them and a visit to Japan upcoming), Gene, Paul, Peter, and Ace head back to New York for the recording of their sixth Casablanca lp. Eddie Kramer, the first and the best, again occupies the producer's chair. "He turned down a live Led Zep lp and a live Stones album to do this," Simmons says, flattered. "He

even got a personal call from Jagger!"

Gene continues: "What we're trying to do this time out is a contradiction in terms—a live studio album. We recorded it at the Nanuet Star Theater in New Jersey, a theatre in the round. Everyone's played here! Even Marlene Dietrich! Usually we've spent about six days per album, laying the basic tracks. This time we spent two and a half weeks. It's a little lighter. No 'I Am the God of Creation' stuff, no violins, no howling dogs, no synthesizers, no harelip choirs. Just four guys, turning their instruments all the way up. We tried to experiment with **Destroyer,** satisfied our wanderlust, and we're back to doing what we do best, as the God of Thunder intended."

"KISS is now onto big things," Kramer interjects. "They are playing their best ever, breaking new ground." And as the

KISS Discography

Albums

KISS, Casablanca NBLP 7001; released 2/8/74: "Strutter" (Stanley/Simmons); "Nothin' to Lose" (Simmons); "Firehouse" (Stanley); "Cold Gin" (Frehley); "Let Me Know" (Stanley); "Kissin' Time" (Mann & Lowe); "Deuce" (Simmons); "Love Theme from Kiss" (Stanley/Simmons/Criss/Frehley); "100,000 Years" (Stanley/Simmons); "Black Diamond" (Stanley).

HOTTER THAN HELL, Casablanca NBLP 7006; released 10/22/74: "Got to Choose" (Stanley); "Parasite" (Frehley); "Goin' Blind" (Simmons/Coronel); "Hotter Than Hell" (Stanley); "Let Me Go, Rock 'n Roll" (Stanley/Simmons); "All the Way" (Simmons); "Watchin' You" (Simmons); "Mainline" (Stanley); "Comin' Home" (Stanley/Frehley); "Strange Ways" (Frehley).

DRESSED TO KILL, Casablanca NBLP 7016; released 3/19/75; Certified Gold: "Room Service" (Stanley); "Two Timer" (Simmons); "Ladies in Waiting" (Simmons); "Getaway" (Frehley); "Rock Bottom" (Stanley/Frehley); "C'mon and Love Me" (Stanley); "Anything for My Baby" (Stanley); "She" (Simmons/Coronel); "Love Her All I Can" (Stanley); "Rock and Roll All Nite" (Stanley/Simmons).

ALIVE, Casablanca NBLP 7020; released 9/10/75; 2-LP set; Certified Platinum: "Deuce", "Strutter", "Got to Choose", "Hotter than Hell", "Firehouse", "Nothin' to Lose", "C'mon and Love Me", "Parasite", "She", "Watchin' You", "100,000 Years", "Black Diamond", "Rock Bottom", "Cold Gin", "Rock and Roll All Nite", "Let Me Go, Rock 'n Roll".

DESTROYER, Casablanca NBLP 7025; released 3/15/76; Certified Platinum: "Detroit Rock City" (Stanley/Ezrin); "King Of the Night Time World" (Fowley/Anthony/Stanley/Ezrin); "God of Thunder" (Stanley; "Great Expectations" (Simmons/Ezrin); "Flaming Youth" (Frehley/Stanley/Simmons/Ezrin);"Sweet Pain" (Simmons); "Shout It Out Loud" (Simmons/Stanley/Ezrin); "Beth" (Criss/Penridge/Ezrin); "Do You Love Me" (Fowley/Ezrin/Stanley).

THE ORIGINALS, Casablanca NBLP 7032; released 7/21/76: 3-LP set consisting of "Kiss", "Hotter than Hell", and "Dressed to Kill".

ROCK AND ROLL OVER, Casablanca NBLP 7037; released 11/1/76; Certified Platinum: "I Want You" (Stanley); "Take Me" (Stanley/Delaney); "Calling Dr. Love" (Simmons); "Ladies Room" (Simmons); "Baby Driver" (Criss/Penridge); "Love 'Em and Leave 'Em" (Simmons); "Mr. Speed" (Stanley/Delaney); "See You in Your Dreams" (Simmons); "Hard Luck Woman" (Stanley); "Makin' Love" (Stanley/Delaney).

Singles

"Let Me Go, Rock 'n Roll" (Casablanca NB 823; released 1/10/75); "Rock and Roll All Nite" (Casablanca NB 829; released 4/2/75) "C'mon and Love Me" (Casablanca NB 841; released 7/10/75); "Rock and Roll All Nite" (Casablanca NB 850; released 10/14/75); "Shout It Out Loud" (Casablanca NB 854; released 3/1/76); "Flaming Youth" (Casablanca NB 858; released 4/30/76); "Detroit Rock City" (Casablanca NB 863; released 7/28/76; b/w "Beth"); "Hard Luck Woman" (Casablanca NB 873; released 12/1/76); "Calling Dr. Love" (Casablanca NB 880; released 3/3/77).

world's foremost genie of the live album, Kramer's last comment is the one that will carry the weight with KISS fans: "We have, without doubt, captured the live spirit of KISS. The beauty of Nanuet was the infinite variety of acoustical conditions. The band rehearsed and played basic tracks in the main showroom. A tunnel under the stage was used to enhance the bass. Microphones around the perimeter of the hall captured the full live sound. Acoustic guitars were recorded in the ticket lobby. It was the best of all pos-

sible situations for a rock and roll band."

"It's like they say," Paul adds, "you have to know all the rules before you can break them. After being taught all the rules through five albums, we've decided to write a few of our own. We've all grown as musicians and so our ideas about basic rock are different from three years ago. But then, the more you know, the more basic 'basic' can be."

Thus, when KISS took to the road last fall, they were travelling on the momentum of their finest album to date. "It was just like the beginning," Simmons says with eyes gleaming. "We went to Ypsilanti! **KISS went to the people!"**

Will they be the same KISS that the KISS Army has come to know and revere? Gene and Paul's answers to a question posed during the recording of **Rock and Roll Over** should make it clear.

"What," they were asked, "is it like being part of KISS?"

Gene: "All the fantasies you associate with stardom are true. My tongue has been in more hidden corners than your mind can imagine."

Paul: "It's like when you're growing up and you get hair on your chest and you don't think much of it. Then some women see it and say, 'WOW!' So you begin wearing your shirt open a few more buttons. It's a good feeling to know you satisfy a woman's needs, and it puts you in a position to have that woman satisfy yours. We communicate with our audiences in the same way.

"KISS," Paul continued, "is **proof!** KISS restores the faith in young people that fantasies can come true!"

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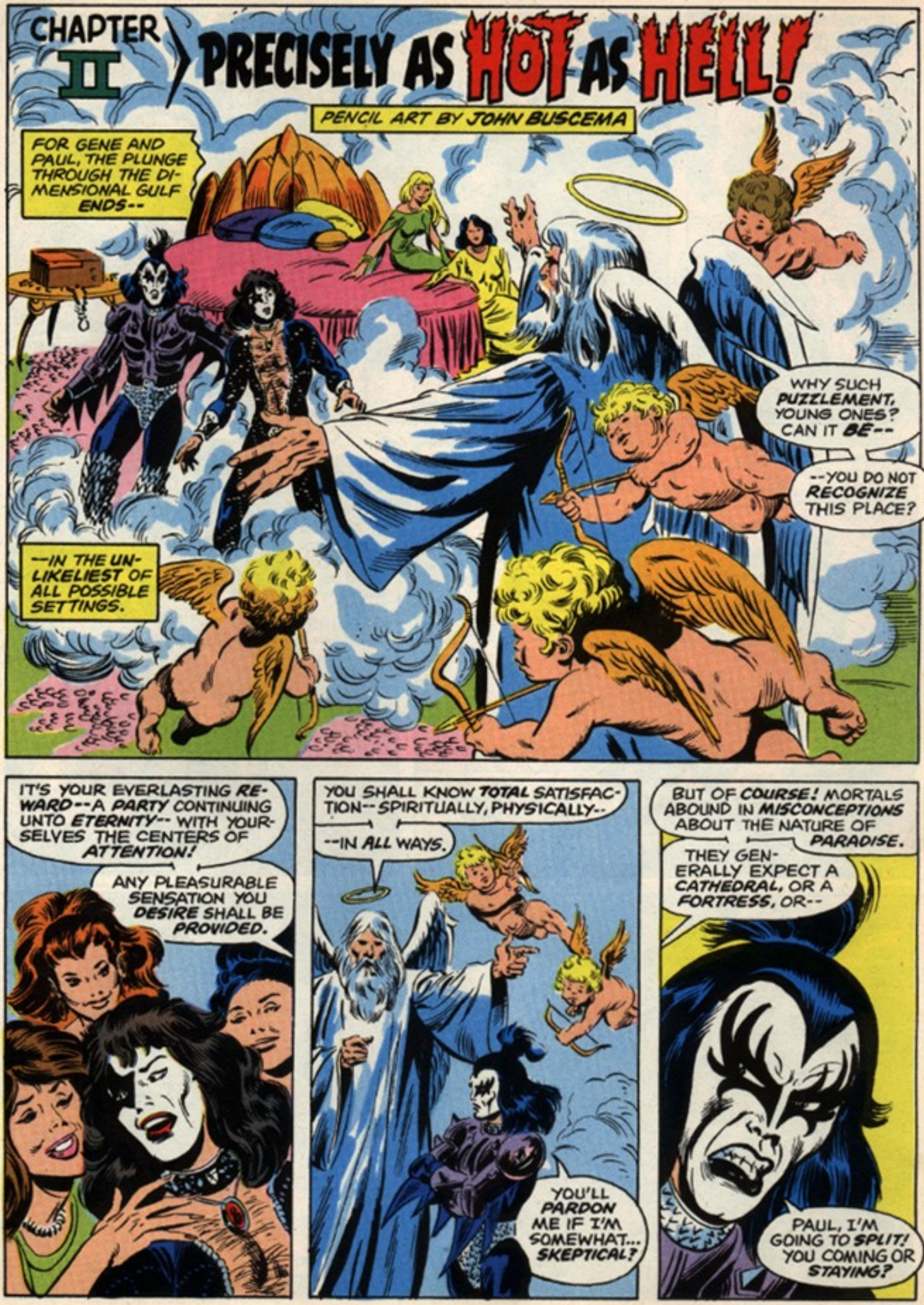

CHAPTER II
PRECISELY AS HOT AS HELL!
PENCIL ART BY JOHN BUSCEMA
FOR GENE AND PAUL, THE PLUNGE THROUGH THE DIMENSIONAL GULF ENDS--
--IN THE UNLIKELIEST OF ALL POSSIBLE SETTINGS.
WHY SUCH PUZZLEMENT, YOUNG ONES? CAN IT BE--
--YOU DO NOT RECOGNIZE THIS PLACE?
IT'S YOUR EVERLASTING REWARD--A PARTY CONTINUING UNTO ETERNITY-- WITH YOURSELVES THE CENTERS OF ATTENTION!
ANY PLEASURABLE SENSATION YOU DESIRE SHALL BE PROVIDED.
YOU SHALL KNOW TOTAL SATISFACTION--SPIRITUALLY, PHYSICALLY--
--IN ALL WAYS.
YOU'LL PARDON ME IF I'M SOMEWHAT... SKEPTICAL?
BUT OF COURSE! MORTALS ABOUND IN MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF PARADISE.
THEY GENERALLY EXPECT A CATHEDRAL, OR A FORTRESS, OR--
PAUL, I'M GOING TO SPLIT! YOU COMING OR STAYING?

HE HAS NO CHOICE, MR. SIMMONS. NOR HAVE YOU. YOU ARE DEAD.
AND THIS IS YOUR LIFE... EVERLASTING.
AND SHOULD YOU ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE...
...YOU'LL FIND MY CHERUBIM ARMED AND VIGILANT.
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS ABOUT SPLITTING, MAN?! REALLY!
THESE CHICKS ACT LIKE THEY'VE JUST DISCOVERED BOYS!
I DON'T WANNA BREAK THEIR HEARTS!
OF THAT, THE DEMON HAS NO DOUBT.
SO HE OPTS FOR A MORE DRAMATIC MEDIUM THAN MERE WORDS TO CONVEY HIS REPLY.
GENE-- NO!!
MAN, EVEN FOR YOU THIS IS A NEW LOW! BLASTING CHERUBS! I MEAN...
BUT THE STAR-CHILD'S OUTRAGE TURNS TO ASTONISHMENT...
...WHEN HE OBSERVES THE "CHERUBS" STRIPPED BY FLAME OF THEIR DISGUISES!

ANGER MOUNTING, HIS INTUITION CONFIRMED, THE DEMON WHIRLS--AND TURNS HIS FIERY WRATH ON THE ARCHANGEL!
YEAARGH
HAHAHAHAHAHAHA
AND THE LATTER IS AMUSED NO END.

BUT THE BLAST ELICITS MORE THAN LAUGHTER:
AS THE WHITE ROBES BURN, THE HEAVENLY FIGURE IS DEVOURED IN A BLINDING BURST OF ORANGE AND CRIMSON.

AND WHEN THE HOLOCAUST SUBSIDES, HE STANDS REVEALED AS--
MEPHISTO-- LORD OF THE DARK DEPTHS!!

THE LANDSCAPE, TOO, IS RADICALLY ALTERED.
SHALL I SAY IT FOR YOU, MR. SIMMONS?
THIS IS INDEED-- HELL!

JAGGED STALACTITES AND THE PUTRID STENCH OF SULFUR HAVE REPLACED THE BILLOWING MIST AND SOFT PERFUME. AND AS FOR THE LADIES--

--THOSE PHENOMENAL BEAUTIES-- THEY'VE CHANGED, ALSO-- TO GNARLED, LEATHERY, GROPING, CLAWING HAGS!

SUCCUBI!
NO, NO, PAULIE-- DON'T SQUIRM! WE STILL WANT YOU!

YOU PLUCKED US FROM DIMENSIONAL SPACE-- BROUGHT US HERE INTENTIONALLY!
WHY??
AND WHY THE ELABORATE CHARADE--THE ENTICEMENTS TO STAY--
--WHEN YOUR POWER IN THESE DEPTHS IS ABSOLUTE?
COME NOW, DEMON-- EVEN YOU CANNOT ACCEPT SUCH SIMPLISTIC LOGIC!
WHY DISPATCH YOUR "PETS" TO ATTACK ME--IF YOU ENTERTAIN NO HOPE OF VICTORY?
PAULIE--NO, PAULIE--DON'T SOMERSAULT AWAY!
WE WANT YOU!
I'M SURE YOU DO, LADIES-- BUT YOU KNOW HOW I VALUE HONESTY IN ALL MY RE-LATIONSHIPS-- I MEAN, TOTAL HONESTY!
AND I DON'T THINK YOU'VE SHOWN ME YOUR TRUE SELVES EVEN YET!
BARE YOUR SOULS, GIRLS!
THAT'S BETTER--!
UNLOCK THE SLIMY LITTLE SLUGS IN YOUR HEARTS!
I AM THE TEMPTOR, DEMON-- THE BASE DECEIVER!
THE SOULS WHO SERVE ME BEST SERVE ME WILLINGLY!

Y-YOU MEANT TO TAME US--SATE OUR EVERY PASSION --REDUCE US TO--
--HOUSEHOLD PETS? YES! DUMB, WELL-FED, AND EAGER TO DO MY BIDDING!
AND I SUBMIT YOU ARE A FOOL TO ESCHEW THE PLEASURES I OFFER--!
:UNNGH: ILLUSORY PLEASURES!
NO MORE SO THAN THE "FREEDOM" YOU STRUGGLE TO PRESERVE!
HAS IT YET TO DAWN ON YOU, BRUTE--THAT I COULD ABDUCT YOU AGAIN--
--WHEN EVER I CHOOSE?
AND IF YOU DO-- YOU'LL FIND ME JUST AS CONTEN-TIOUS!
I RELISH MY NEW POWER--I WANT TO SAVOR IT-- WIELD IT AT MY WHIM!
BETTER BY FAR TO DOMINATE ON EARTH THAN TO SERVE IN HELL!!
HAHAHAHAAHAHAHAHA
YOUR AUDACITY ASTOUNDS EVEN MY JADED SENSIBILITIES, DEMON!
VERY WELL-- BEGONE! WIELD YOUR PRECIOUS, PETTY POWER!
AT LEAST I MAY BE SPARED THE TASK OF YOUR TUTELAGE!
PERHAPS YOU'LL BE A SEASONED SLAYER OF SOULS-- WHEN WE MEET AGAIN!

CHAPTER III: THE ANDROMEDIA HUSTLE!

(PENCIL ART BY ALAN WEISS)

THERE IS INDEED, AND EVEN FROM ACROSS THE ROOM...
...THE ATTRACTION SEEMS MUTUAL.
SHE MEETS HIS EYES: ACKNOWLEDGEMENT, INVITATION.
HE STEPS FORWARD, CURIOUS BUT SURE-FOOTED.
THEY MEET.
I AM CALLED MANDU.
CRISS-- PETER CRISS.
THEY DANCE.
AND TOUCH.
AND PURR.
AND WHEN THE MUSIC'S OVER...
...IT'S CLEAR THEY'RE THE HIT OF THE EVENING.
AMID APPLAUSE AND MURMURS, THEY LEAVE THE DANCE FLOOR...
...OBLIVIOUS TO ALL BUT ONE ANOTHER.
SO THIS IS ROMANCE.
OBOY... THERE'S GONNA BE TROUBLE TONIGHT!
MANDU IS BIG LEO'S QUEEN.
THAT LITTLE TOM AIN'T LONG FOR THIS SATTELITE!
UH-OH.

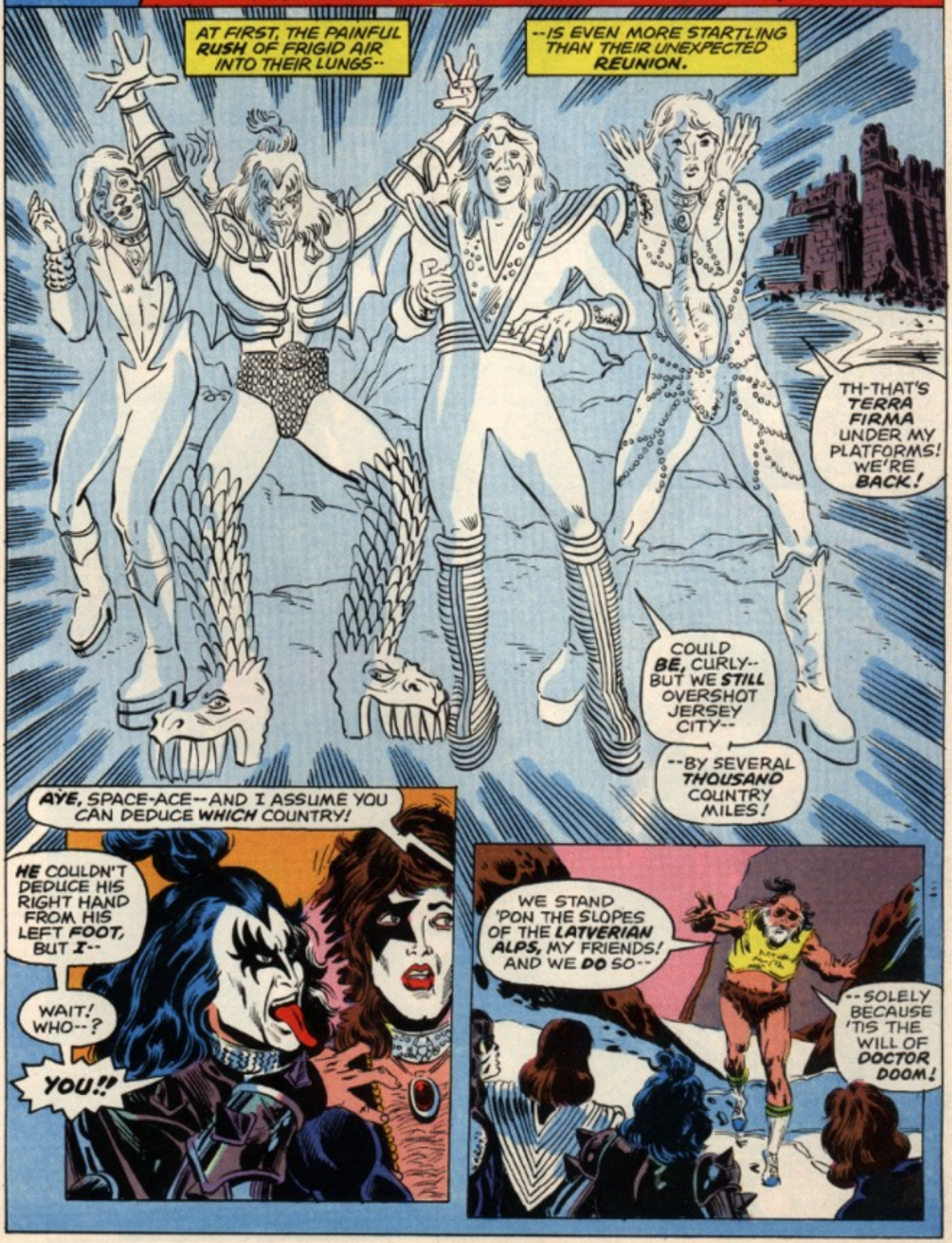
SHALL WE SIT THIS ONE OUT, PETER CRISS?
I'VE LOCATED A TABLE, M' DEAR --THIS WAY.
YOU'RE NEW AROUND HERE, AREN'T YOU, PETER CRISS. JUST PASSING THROUGH?
WELL...
IT WOULD BE NICE IF YOU COULD STAY...WITH ME. WOULD YOU LIKE THAT?
MAYBE... BUT IT'S NOT IN THE STARS, MANDU.
OH?
I'VE GOT THIS OTHER GIG...ON THIS OTHER WORLD... AND I'VE GOT TO SEE IT THROUGH.
CAN'T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF 'ER, CAN YA, SHORTY? BUT YOU'D BETTER--
--IF YA WANNA KEEP 'EM!
AH... PETER CRISS, MEET BIG LEO! LEO, UHM, THINKS HE'S MY OLD MAN...!
'SCUSE ME, CURLY, BUT THAT LITTLE CAT IS MY FRIEND, AND--
TAP TAP

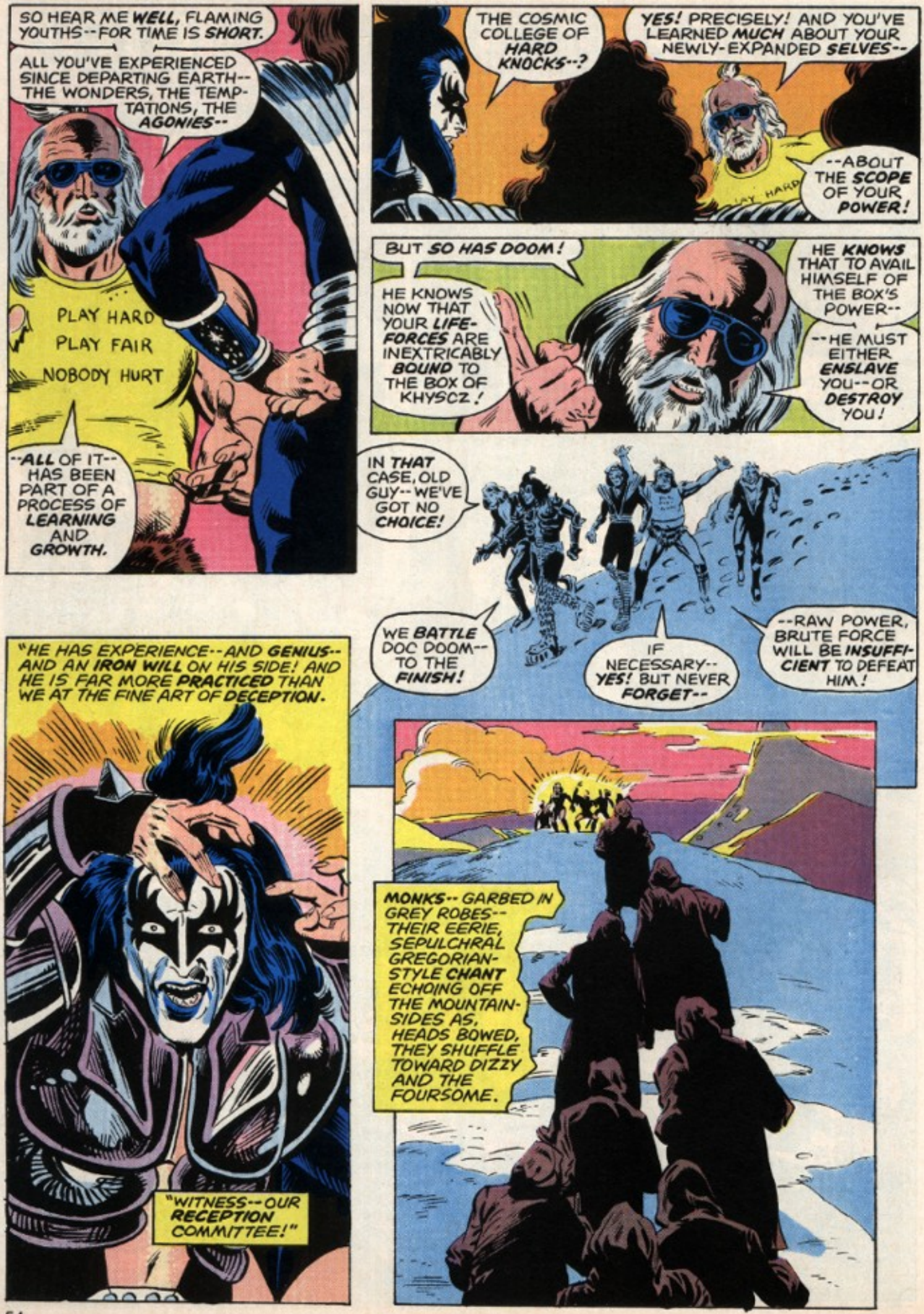
SORRY TA HEAR THAT, SUCKER!
WE'RE FRIENDS O' BIG LEO'S.
THAT MEANS WE GOTTA POUND YA INTA THE GROUND!
AW-- RELAX, KITTY-CAT!
I WOULDN'T DO THAT TO YOU!
CRUSHING YOUR WRIST TO POWDER OUGHTTA TEACH YOU--
--HUH?!
NOBODY EVER BROKE THAT GRIP BEFORE!
YOU'LL HAVE TO LET ME UP NOW, FELLOWS. PETER NEEDS MY HELP.
THERE YOU GO, CURLY-- YOUR BASIC CONE OF FORCE. HE'S TRAPPED.
NEITHER DID I, CHUCKLES!
CHOK
I SLIPPED FREE-- YOU KNOW-- CATLIKE?
Y-YOU'RE OKAY? YOU'RE NOT-- HURT?
HURT? ME?? LISTEN, CURLY, YOU'RE THE ONE THAT GETS INTO FIGHTS, NOT ME!

I AM IMPRESSED, PETER CRISS. YOUR FRIEND IS AS POWERFUL AS YOU ARE... PREPOSSESSING.
YEAH, OL' ACE IS--
UH, CURLY-- WE MAY HAVE REASON TO WORRY.
GRRRRR
THAT GLOWING WALKING STICK OF LEO'S HAS SLASHED RIGHT THROUGH...
MMROWR
DOWN, YOU FOOL--OFF ME! IT'S MANDU I--
UNNGH
TUNK
ZZZZZZZ
FWIT
THE WALKING STICK'S GONE, CURLY--AND I THINK HE'S UNCONSCIOUS.
YOU CAN STOP NOW...
...AND BID YOUR SWEETHEART FAREWELL! WE MUST BE GOING.
I SEE GENE...AND PAUL...AND VANILLA.

CHAPTER IV SEE LATVERIA AND DIE!

(PENCIL ART BY RICH BUCKLER AND JOHN BUSCEMA)




SO HEAR ME WELL, FLAMING YOUTHS--FOR TIME IS SHORT.
ALL YOU'VE EXPERIENCED SINCE DEPARTING EARTH--THE WONDERS, THE TEMPTATIONS, THE AGONIES--
PLAY HARD
PLAY FAIR
NOBODY HURT
--ALL OF IT--HAS BEEN PART OF A PROCESS OF LEARNING AND GROWTH.
THE COSMIC COLLEGE OF HARD KNOCKS--?
YES! PRECISELY! AND YOU'VE LEARNED MUCH ABOUT YOUR NEWLY-EXPANDED SELVES--
--ABOUT THE SCOPE OF YOUR POWER!
BUT SO HAS DOOM!
HE KNOWS NOW THAT YOUR LIFE-FORCES ARE INEXTRICABLY BOUND TO THE BOX OF KHYSCZ!
HE KNOWS THAT TO AVAIL HIMSELF OF THE BOX'S POWER--
--HE MUST EITHER ENSLAVE YOU--OR DESTROY YOU!
IN THAT CASE, OLD GUY--WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE!
WE BATTLE DOC DOOM--TO THE FINISH!
IF NECESSARY--YES! BUT NEVER FORGET--
--RAW POWER, BRUTE FORCE WILL BE INSUFFICIENT TO DEFEAT HIM!
"HE HAS EXPERIENCE--AND GENIUS--AND AN IRON WILL ON HIS SIDE! AND HE IS FAR MORE PRACTICED THAN WE AT THE FINE ART OF DECEPTION.
"WITNESS--OUR RECEPTION COMMITTEE!"
MONKS--GARBED IN GREY ROBES--THEIR EERIE, SEPULCHRAL GREGORIAN-STYLE CHANT ECHOING OFF THE MOUNTAIN-SIDES AS, HEADS BOWED, THEY SHUFFLE TOWARD DIZZY AND THE FOURSOME.

JEEZ--THEY LOOK LIKE DEATH WARMED OVER--AND CLONED!
LIKE SOME WAITRESSES I KNOW--IF YOU CATCH MY MEANING.
--ETERNAL PEACE!
PEACE BE WITH YOU, OUTLANDERS--
DAMN! NEVER OCCURRED TO ME HE'D PULL THE SAME STUNT TWICE!
ZASH
THEY'RE ROBOTS--WITH LASERS BEHIND THEIR EYES!!
FURIOUS, THE DEMON RAMS A SPIKED FIST DEEP INTO THE GUTS OF THE MECHANISM...
...LIFTING IT HIGH OFF THE GROUND! AND BEFORE THE EVISCERATED AUTOMATION CAN DROP...
...IT IS INCINERATED!
FWASH
YAARRGH!
WITH THAT, ALL ARTIFICE IS ABANDONED. THE BATTLE IS JOINED.
ACE'S VIBRATORY POWERS SHAKE, RATTLE, AND WRENCH HIS ATTACKER TO PIECES.

CHUNT
CHOOM
WHILE CAT, STARCHILD, AND DEMON EMPLOY LESS ESOTERIC--
--BUT EQUALLY DEVASTATING MEANS TO DISMANTLE THEIR OPPONENTS!
WHUK
WHUK
YEARRGH
SHORTLY, THE SLOPE IS SILENT ONCE MORE--EXCEPT FOR THE DEMON'S GROWLING, SARDONIC LAUGHTER.
VAINGLORIOUSNESS IS INAPPROPRIATE, MY, FRIEND.
WELL, I BEG TO DIFFER, OLD MAN! LOOK ABOUT YOU!
WE'VE WON! WE--
SUDDENLY--
RRRRRRUMBMB
THE MOUNTAIN ITSELF SEEMS TO STIR TO LIFE--
--QUAKING, TREMBLING, AND FINALLY ERUPTING INTO A PUCKER OF STONE!
SSSSSMMOOC
DON'T TRY'N FIGHT IT, CURLY--PRETEND YOU'RE MAKING LOVE.

BUT BEFORE THE OTHERS CAN INQUIRE ABOUT ACE'S WEIRD ADMONITION, THE LIPS FORM A SENSUOUS "O"--
--AND COMMENCE TO INHALE!
IT--IT'S SUCKING US IN-- CAN'T RESIST--!
TSK NOW, BOYS, ONE DOESN'T RESIST A LOVER!
THE HARDER YOU STRUGGLE AGAINST HER-- THE MORE FATAL HER ATTRACTION GROWS.
SO DON'T STRUGGLE! DON'T FIGHT IT. JUST RELAX!
YEAARRGH
P-PAUL-- MAYBE HE'S RIGHT!
H-HE AND D-DIZZY-- AREN'T BEING --AFFECTED--!
B-BUT HOW CAN WE RELAX WHEN--?
GO LIMP, KITTY-- AND PURR! LIKE SOMEBODY'S SCRATCHING YOUR BELLY!
Y'MEAN JUST-- YEAH--
NO! YOU'RE INSANE! WE'VE GOTTA FIGHT--
MMMRROWR
DAMMIT, SIMMONS-- DON'T FIGHT ME!!
I'M NOT GOING TO THE BOWELS OF THE EARTH BECAUSE YOU HADDA PLAY THE BIG HERO!
SO ROLL OVER AND SHUT UP!!
THUNK
HIS OWN ENERGY EXPENDED IN THE EFFORT OF CALMING THE DEMON...
SIIIGH
...THE STARCHILD, TOO, LIES LIMP AND EXHAUSTED. AND THE THREAT IS ENDED.

UNFORTUNATELY, BEFORE THE QUARTET CAN CATCH ITS COLLECTIVE BREATH:
CHASH
SOME FORCE--SORCEROUS OR SCIENTIFIC OR BOTH--REMOVES THEM FROM THE MOUNTAINSIDE...
...AND DEPOSITS THEM HERE.
AND THEY'RE NOT ALONE.
WHUK
DO NOT WASTE THE EFFORT, DEMON.
THE ENTIRE LENGTH OF DR. DOOM'S ARMOR IS ELECTRIFIED!
YOUR FIRST BLOW WILL BE YOUR LAST!
KRAK
AAARGH
MROW-OWRR
YOUR IDEA OF A SNEAK ATTACK, FELINE?
HOW PATHETIC! SUCH GARGANTUAN POWER--
--SQUANDERED ON THE LIKES OF YOU!
SHOOM!
NNMPH
IMBECILES! INCOMPETENTS! ADOLESCENT, ATAVISTIC--
GASP AW, C-C'MON--ISN'T TH-THAT A LITTLE GASP HARSH?
E-EVEN YOU MUST'A BEEN A KID ONCE, CURLY--

TOUCHÉ! FOR THE MEREST MOMENT, DOOM HESITATES--STARTLED AND APPARENTLY AFFECTED BY ACE'S OFF-THE-WALL ADMONITION.
AND THAT MOMENTARY WAVER DOES NOT GO UNNOTICED BY THE STARCHILD!
STILL REELING FROM DOOM'S BLOW...
...PAUL NONETHELESS BRINGS TO BEAR THE POWER OF THE BLACK STAR!
AND DOOM STANDS IMMOBILE, FLOODED WITH EMOTION!
WHAT IS IT, DOOM? WHAT NERVE DID ACE TOUCH? TALK TO ME, MAN!
NO!!
YOU CAN'T SUPPRESS THE PAIN FOREVER, DOC!
DOOM'S HEAD THROBS--
--AS THE GRIM PAST REPLAYS BEFORE HIS MIND'S EYE.
TH-THEY KILLED...MY FATHER...!
"THEY--THE WORLD--MANKIND!
"THEY KILLED MY FATHER--LYNCHED MY MOTHER--HOUNDED MY GYPSY BRETHREN--!
"THEY DROVE ME--INTO THIS METAL SHELL--!
AND THEY FORCED ME TO CHOOSE BETWEEN SUBSERVIENCE AND SOVEREIGNTY!
THE FIRST WAS DEGRADING BUT SAFE--THE LATTER, FRAUGHT WITH PERIL...

AND YET, VICTOR, EVEN AS A CHILD-- YOU KNEW!
THE DANGERS MUST BE MET, THE QUESTIONS ASKED-- IF ONE IS TO ACTUALIZE ONE'S POTENTIAL!
YOU!!
YOU BECAME ALL YOU COULD BE, VICTOR! WOULD YOU DENY THESE YOUTHS THAT SAME PRIVILEGE-- WOULD YOU??
I-- I--
YES!!
WITH THAT, DOOM WRENCHES HIMSELF FREE OF THE STAR BEAM--
--AND LUNGES AT AN INCREDULOUS PAUL.
BUT BY NOW, THE DEMON HAS HAD SUFFICIENT TIME TO RECOVER.
HE--HE TRIED TO KILL US-- AND FAILED!
HE UNDERESTIMATED US--AND SO DID WE!
VICTOR--HEAR ME! THIS FARCE HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH! IN YOUR HEART OF HEARTS, YOU ADMIRE THESE FOUR!
IT MUST BE SO--ELSE THEY WOULD BE DEAD!
KLANG
DO NOT PREACH TO ME, AGED ONE--!
"VICTOR"--THE CHILD YOU KNEW --PERISHED LONG AGO!
DR. DOOM KNOWS WHAT HE FEELS-- AND WHAT HE WANTS!

AND WOULD YOUR FATHER APPROVE OF THOSE EMOTIONS, THOSE DESIRES, DOCTOR DOOM?
HE WAS A PHYSICIAN--A HEALER!
YOU DARE--?!
NO MAN INVOKES MY FATHER'S NAME AGAINST ME--AND LIVES!
THEN STRIKE ME DOWN, VICTOR!
I--I CANNOT!
NOT YOU--NOT THE MAN WHO TUTORED MY MOTHER IN THE MYSTIC ARTS--
--THE MAN WHO SPOKE THE EULOGY OVER HER GRAVE--
--NOT YOU.
BUT I--I CAN BANISH YOU FROM THIS LAND--YOU AND YOUR NEW CHARGES!
AND I DO SO DECREE!
BEGONE--ALL OF YOU!!
AND DEPART KNOWING YOU'VE NOT HEARD THE LAST OF DR. DOOM!!
ACE...BEFORE HE CHANGES HIS MIND--?
NO SOONER SAID, CURLY.
THANK YOU--VICTOR. AND COUNT THIS AS A TRIUMPH.
"YOU'VE WON MORE THAN YOU SUSPECT THIS DAY."
AND THEN--FADEOUT.

Y'KNOW--I MUST BE GETTIN' THE HANG OF THIS! IT'S ALL WRIST ACTION, I THINK.
MUST BE, PAL--WE'RE HOME!
AND WHAT'S WORSE, CURLY--
--WE BLEND RIGHT IN AGAIN!
I KNEW IT WAS TOO GOOD TO LAST!
AH, BUT YOU'VE SURVIVED YOUR BAPTISM OF FIRE!
THE BOX OF KHYSCZ WILL MAKE YOU KINGS OF THE NIGHTTIME WORLD--
--BUT YOU MUST LIVE THE DAYS, AS WELL, WITH THE SAME COURAGE TO EXPLORE!
RETURN THE TALISMANS TO THE BOX, PLEASE.
OKAY...IF YOU ANSWER ONE BURNING QUESTION.
WHY IS IT CALLED THE "BOX OF KISS?"
PROB'LY 'CAUSE ITS FATHER COULDN'T SPELL OSCULATE, CURLY.
MORE LIKELY, IT'S THE NAME OF THE SORCERER WHO CREATED IT--OR THE ANCIENT CITY WHERE--!
ANYWAY, WHAT'S IN A NAME?
I DUNNO--IT'S A NICE CODE WORD FOR OUR NEW IDENTITIES.
IT HAS A RING TO IT: THIS IS A JOB FOR--
KISS®
SO BE IT.
PLAY
FIN

Thus, the lid falls on the Box of Khyscz and this first MARVEL COMICS SUPER-SPECIAL starring KISS draws to a close. But before you bid us farewell and light out to become king or queen of your own nighttime world, we just *gotta* shout out loud:

We! Wa-a-ant! YOU!!

See, as we mentioned in our editorial, this is Marvel's very first venture into the Elysian mine fields of rock 'n' roll. But we've already got the itch to do it again. And you can be of enormous help by letting us get to know you, by helping us plan our new magazines, by (why beat around the bush?) filling us in on a few semi-intimate details about yourself, your interests, your lifestyle. And we'll even make it worth your while! One lucky respondent to this questionnaire, chosen at random, will receive a page of the original art from this landmark KISS Comics magazine! So what are you waiting for? Start scribbling!

Name _____
Okay, okay—now your *real* name! _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Age _____ How many brother and/or sisters do you have? _____ How many persons other than yourself (family or friends, for example) will read this copy of KISS? _____

How did you first learn about Marvel's KISS magazine?
☐ Radio ☐ Magazine article ☐ Magazine advertisement
☐ Marvel's Bullpen Page ☐ The grapevine ☐ Pure dumb luck
☐ Other (specify) _____

Are you a regular reader of Marvel Comics? ☐ Yes ☐ No
If so, which are your favorites? _____
_____
Approximately how many comics did you buy last month? _____

Which of the following magazines do you read regularly?
☐ Circus ☐ Rock Scene ☐ Creem ☐ Crawdaddy
☐ Hit Parader ☐ Rolling Stone
What other publications do you read regularly? _____

Other than those assigned in school, what are the last three books you've read? _____
_____

What are your favorite TV programs? _____

What are your favorite three leisure activities? _____
_____

How many record albums have you purchased in the last month? _____ How many rock concerts have you attended in the past six months? _____ Who are your three favorite groups or individual artists? _____
_____

Can you put into words what you like most about KISS? _____
_____
_____
_____
_____

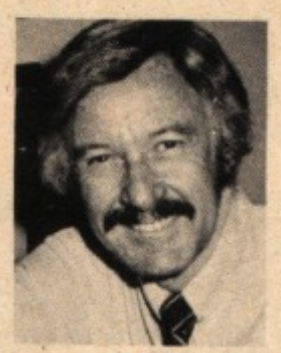
Yeah. We know. That last one's difficult to explain in words. But thanks for sharing your feeling with us. When you've completed this questionnaire, please mail it to:

WE! WANT! YOU!
Marvel Comics Group Sixth Floor
575 Madison Avenue New York, NY 10022

Deadline is August 1, 1977, to be eligible for that page of KISS artwork. Our winner will be notified by mail before September 30, 1977.

KISS HEADLINES ALL OVER THE WORLD!

Backstage



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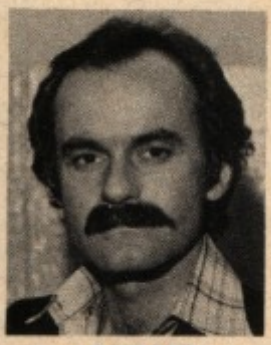

AUCOIN

GERBER

DELANEY

MILLER

WEISS

J. BUSCEMA

MILGROM

S. BUSCEMA

SEVERIN

BRODSKY

How a Comic Book Is Born:

Stage One: Conception. In this case, it occurs when **Bill Aucoin** and **Alan Miller**, KISS's manager and director of promotion respectively, imbed the seed of an idea in the fertile mind of Marvel's publisher, **Stan Lee.**

Stage Two: Embrionic Development. Within the womb of Marvel, the cell divides. Stan assigns **Steve Gerber** the happy—if frantic—chore of editing and scripting the magazine. Steve meets with Alan, Bill, and with **Sean Delaney**, Aucoin Management's V.P. In Charge of Artist Development, and the genetic programming gets underway. (So many pages of comics, so many pages of text, six toes, etc., etc.) And Sean creates the concept of the "wishing box", or Box of Khyscz, as it comes to be known.

Steve selects **Alan Weiss** to "pencil" the book, i.e., illustrate the story in pencil drawings, and in several late-night sessions, the two shape a scenario, a plotline, which Steve dutifully types. The scenario includes descriptions of the settings and characters, fragmentary dialogue, suggestions for "camera angles," and so on.

Stage Three: the Foetus. Working from this synopsis, Alan starts drawing, feeding the pages to Steve for scripting. The writer also indicates the placement of balloons and captions for letterers **John Costanza** and **Irv Watanabe.** (Yes. Every page of a comic book is lettered by hand.)

Soon, however, Marvel's sophisticated prenatal diagnostic devices—consisting of a calendar—reveal a problem. The pencilled pages aren't arriving rapidly enough. Steve and Marvel's production manager **Sol Brodsky** call in three of Marvel's finest to aid in the pencilling: **John Buscema**, best-known for his work on CONAN THE BARBARIAN; **Rich Buckler**, who created DEATHLOK and pencilled the FANTASTIC FOUR; and **Sal Buscema**, John's brother, who's drawn almost every Marvel magazine at one time or another.

The pages make their way from penciller to scripter to letterer to embellisher **Allen Milgrom**, who artfully applies India ink and an additional individualistic flair to the original art. Now it's permanent.

From the inker, the pages return to Marvel for coloring by one of this industry's most respected and sought-after practicioners of the art, **Marie Severin.**

Stage Four: Labor. Marie's color guides, prepared with special dyes on photostats of the original art, accompany that artwork to the engraver for color separations, which is followed by the engraving of printing plates, which in turn are handed to the printer, and at last the presses roll! Now the editor can start pacing the corridors, wringing his hands like an expectant father.

That's how it's done. And, like the birth of a baby, it's often accompanied by weird side-effects: strange cravings—to strangle one's co-workers; morning-, noon-, and night-sickness as the deadline approaches; distended eyeballs; other symptoms too gruesome to describe.

It all culminates in publication, when the magazine actually reaches the newsstands. It's the industry's answer not only to delivery but also orgasm, and though a poor substitute, it remains the only Blessed Event in publishing. Until the next deadline.

So now you know: all those stories they told you about storks were malicious lies! Comic books are made just like babies—by passionate, creative human beings.

Now, how about a round of applause for this veritable orgy of talent?

PLATINUM

NBLP 7020—796

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PLATINUM

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